

anticipate or control events. Instead accept them with grace and intelligence.

It is impossible to remain faithful to your ordained purpose if you drift into imagining that those things outside your power are inherently good or evil. When this happens the habit of blaming outside factors for our lot in life inevitably sets in, and we lose ourselves in a negative spiral of envy, strife, disappointment, anger, and reproach. For by nature all creatures recoil from the things they think would do them harm and seek out and admire those things that seem good and helpful.

The second aspect of faithfulness is the importance of prudently observing the customs of your family, your country, and local community. Perform your community's rituals with a pure heart, without greed or extravagance. In doing so, you join the spiritual order of your people and further the ultimate aspirations of humanity.

Faithfulness is the antidote to bitterness and confusion. It confers the conviction that we are ready for anything the divine will intends for us. Your aim should be to view the world as an integrated whole, to faithfully incline your whole being toward the highest good, and to adopt the will of nature as your own.

## Events Are Impersonal and Indifferent



When considering the future, remember that all situations unfold as they do regardless of how we feel about them. Our hopes and fears sway us, not events themselves.

Undisciplined people, driven by their personal antipathies and sympathies, are forever on the lookout for signs that build up or reinforce their unexamined views and opinions. Events themselves are impersonal, though judicious people certainly can and should respond to them in beneficial ways.

Instead of personalizing an event ("This is my triumph," "That was his blunder," or "This is my bitter misfortune") and drawing withering conclusions about yourself or human nature, watch for how you can put certain aspects of the event to good use. Is there some less-than-obvious benefit embedded in the event that a trained eye might discern? Pay attention; be a sleuth. Perhaps there is a lesson you can extract and apply to similar events in the future.

In any events, however seemingly dire, there is nothing to prevent us from searching for its hidden opportunity. It is a failure of the imagination not to do so. But to seek out the opportunity in situations requires a great deal of courage, for most people around you will persist in interpreting events in the grossest terms: success or failure, good or bad, right or wrong. These simplistic, polarized categories obscure more creative—and useful—

interpretations of events that are far more advantageous and interesting!

The wise person knows it is fruitless to project hopes and fears on the future. This only leads to forming melodramatic representations in your mind and wasting time.

At the same time, one shouldn't passively acquiesce to the future and what it holds. Simply doing nothing does not avoid risk, but heightens it.

There is a place for prudent planning and for making provision for situations to come. Proper preparation for the future consists of forming good personal habits. This is done by actively pursuing the good in all the particulars of your daily life and by regularly examining your motives to make sure they are free of the shackles of fear, greed, and laziness. If you do this, you won't be buffeted about by outside events.

Train your intentions rather than fooling yourself into thinking you can manipulate outside events. If you are helped by praying or meditating, by all means do so. But seek divine counsel when the application of your own reason hasn't yielded any answers, when you have exhausted other means.

What is a "good" event? What is a "bad" event? There is no such thing! What is a good person? The one who achieves tranquility by having formed the habit of asking on every occasion, "What is the right thing to do now?"

## Never Suppress a Generous Impulse



Follow through on all your generous impulses. Do not question them, especially if a friend needs you; act on his or her behalf. Do not hesitate!

Don't sit around speculating about the possible inconvenience, problems, or dangers. As long as you let your reason lead the way, you will be safe.

It is our duty to stand by our friends in their hour of need.